



May 11, 2018

The Honorable Paul D. Ryan  
Speaker of the House of Representatives  
H-232, United States Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Just months after passing the deficit-exploding tax scam that hurts millions of middle class families, Republicans this week introduced President Trump's rescissions package that eliminates billions of dollars from the Children's Health Insurance Program. The legislation also cuts key government functions that help create jobs, grow our economy, and improve the quality of life in our rural communities.

By the Trump Administration's own admission, this legislation is the first step in a process that is designed to break a carefully-negotiated, bipartisan agreement on federal spending just two months after it was signed into law. It has already begun to erode the trust that is necessary for the timely completion of work on the fiscal year 2019 appropriations bills, which the Appropriations Committee is currently marking up.

Under the Impoundment Control Act (ICA), the Government Accountability Office (GAO) is charged with reviewing President Trump's proposed rescissions, issuing a report on their effects as promptly as practicable, and determining the legality of the proposals. GAO has indicated that it will provide its report by May 22, providing the House and Senate with sufficient time to consider a rescissions bill by June 22 – the deadline specified in the ICA. In addition to being legally required, the GAO review is essential to Congress fulfilling its responsibility to be a good steward of public funds.


Yesterday, Majority Leader McCarthy announced that the House may vote on the rescissions package as soon as next week, possibly bypassing Appropriations Committee consideration and without waiting for the GAO report. The Trump-GOP rescission package includes spending cuts that will impose serious hardship on American children and families. Before the House votes on such consequential legislation, we must have a full report from GAO on the rescissions, their impact, and their legality.


It is unacceptable for Republicans to continue their practice of ramming bills through the House in order to escape public scrutiny. A rushed process deprives both the House and the American people of the opportunity to understand the true impacts of the rescission legislation. Moreover, Republicans' approach of voting now and understanding what is in the bill later is an insult to the people we serve.

We urge you not to move this bill without regular order through the Appropriations Committee and not to force a House vote on a rescissions package before GAO has an opportunity to submit its essential, legally-required report.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

  
NANCY PELOSI  
Democratic Leader

  
NITA M. LOWEY  
Ranking Member, Appropriations Committee